



TURNING AFFLUENT ACQUAINTANCES
INTO SATISFIED CLIENTS

One of the biggest challenges that Financial Advisors face is how to effectively turn personal relationships with affluent individuals into business relationships. It is relatively easy for Financial Advisors to put themselves in the right position to meet affluent individuals through involvement in non-profit organizations, introductions by current clients, and getting involved in the community. But transitioning to a business relationship without compromising the personal relationship is not nearly as easy.

The development of personal relationships with wealthy individuals and turning those relationships into clients is one of the most successful marketing approaches that Top Advisors in our industry use. In working with Top Advisors as well as interviewing them for my book, *The Million Dollar Financial Advisor*, (available on Amazon.com) successful FAs described the process as more of an “art” than a “science.” However, as I dug deeper to find out exactly how they accomplished that transition, I discovered they used one or a combination of these three strategies

Direct Approach

This is when you reach out to an affluent personal acquaintance (friend, extended family or co-worker) and ask them directly to meet with you, so that you can share how you make a positive difference in their financial circumstances.

“Mr./Mrs. Personal Contact we have known each other for some time and I know you are an investor and you know I am a financial advisor. Our wealth management process is different from many other Financial Advisors and I feel good about the value we provide our clients. I wanted to ask you if you would be open to meet and let me share how I have helped my clients and see if I could add value to your current investment situation.”

“No thank you I’m covered right now.”

“I understand but I would like to make it an open invitation if your circumstances change.”

We have found many financial advisors are uncomfortable approaching personal relationships about doing business together. At Altius Learning we believe strongly that in order to be comfortable with this approach you have to believe you are better than your personal acquaintances current financial advisor and you can improve their current situation – you are offering them a gift and that gift is you.

It is recommended that this approach be used with individuals that you have the strongest relationship with.

Triggering Approach

This approach is simply asking normal social questions in your interactions with affluent personal contacts. The key to this approach is to pay close attention to their answers and when you find a

“trigger” in which you can provide a solution to a financial challenge that people you know and care about have – your simple offer to help.

The following examples are triggering questions that the top advisors use in employing this strategy and how they respond to the opportunities that arise from these questions.

1. Mr./Ms. Prospect: What’s going on in your life these days? (Divorce, inheritance, business sale, retirement, job change)
2. Mr./Ms. Prospect: How much longer do you plan on working? (retirement opportunity)
3. Mr./Ms. Prospect: How is business going these days? What challenges do you have in your business? (Business sale, lending strategies, retirement plan, succession planning)

Follow up (1 – 2 weeks later): Mr./Ms. Prospect I was thinking about the conversation we had a couple of weeks ago when you shared with me (1, 2 or 3 above). It occurred to me that many of my clients are in the same circumstances as you and face similar challenges. In thinking about your situation, I thought it might be helpful if you we had an informal meeting where I could share with you some of the strategies I use with my clients to help them address the same issues that you described. Could I buy you a cup of coffee to discuss?

The triggering approach is most appropriate to use with affluent personal contacts that you have frequent contact with

Event Invitation Approach

This transition strategy is when you invite a personal contact to one of your events. The intent is for them to meet your clients, have fun and see you in your professional role by “saying something smart”. Your clients will advocate for you and your personal acquaintance will look at you in a different way – transitioning from a personal to professional relationship. We recommend that within 48 hours that you follow up and invite them to an informal discovery meeting to discuss how you might value to their current financial situation.

The following is an example of the event initiation script

“Joe or Jane (personal contact) I am hosting a cooking class/ golf outing/ fine dining event for my best clients and good friends and I wanted to extend you an invitation to join us (provide date and logistics). I would enjoy having you participate and I know you would enjoy the company of my other guests – would you be able to attend?”

The event invitation strategy is typically used with affluent personal relationship where the relationship

isn't strong enough to use the direct approach and that you don't see them often enough to use the triggering strategy

Next Steps

At Altius Learning we recommend that you list all of the affluent personal acquaintances that you have never approached about working with you as a financial advisor. This list should be a minimum of 25 individuals and with no limit on the upside number. We have some coaching clients that have hundreds of individuals on this list. Finally, select the most appropriate of the 3 transition strategies and assign the most appropriate strategy to each name on the list and then implement that strategy.